



DHYAN CHAND

THE WIZARD OF HOCKEY

₹ 100



DHYAN CHAND

IN 1922, A 16-YEAR-OLD BOY, DHYAN SINGH, ENLISTED IN THE FIRST BRAHMANS REGIMENT IN DELHI.

HERE YOU
ARE... TWO PAIRS
OF TROUSERS,
SHIRTS...



THE REGIMENT WAS KNOWN FOR ITS HOCKEY TEAM,
AND SOON DHYAN WAS DRAWN INTO THE GAME.



AS BOYS IN JHANSI,
WE WOULD SOMETIMES HIT
A BALL ALONG THE STREETS
BUT NOT ALWAYS WITH
HOCKEY STICKS!



DHYAN HAD A FLAIR FOR THE GAME AND THIS WAS SOON NOTED BY ONE OF HIS SUPERIORS, SUBEDAR-MAJOR BALE TIWARI, A HOCKEY ENTHUSIAST AND A FINE PLAYER HIMSELF.



I LIKE THE WAY
YOU TAKE THE BALL
ALONG. BUT YOU HAVE
A LOT TO LEARN!

WHAT DO
YOU SUPPOSE IS THE
JOB OF THE CENTRE
FORWARD?

TO TAKE
THE BALL ACROSS
THE FIELD....

...AND HIT IT
INTO THE OPPOSITE
GOAL, SIR.

NO!



WITH TIWARI COACHING HIM, DHYAN'S NATURAL TALENT FOR THE GAME BEGAN TO FLOWER.



AND THEN ONE DAY -

DHYAN, THE NAMES
OF THOSE SELECTED TO PLAY
IN THE ANNUAL TOURNAMENT
HAVE BEEN PUT UP ON THE
NOTICE BOARD!



THE ANNUAL MILITARY HOCKEY TOURNAMENT WAS AN EVENT THAT EVERYONE
WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO. HOCKEY TEAMS FROM DIFFERENT REGIMENTS
PARTICIPATED AND THERE WAS KEEN RIVALRY.



A FORTNIGHT LATER, DHYAN WAS PLAYING HIS FIRST BIG MATCH.



HE AND HIS TEAMMATES WON GAME AFTER GAME...

GOOOOAAAH...

...AND
EMERGED
VICTORIOUS!

WELL DONE, DHYAN
SINGH! YOUR SECOND
GOAL TURNED THE
MATCH AROUND.

THANK
YOU, SIR!

I'VE SEEN A STEADY
IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR
GAME DURING THE
TOURNAMENT. STRAIGHTEN
OUT THE KINKS AND
YOU'LL GO FAR.

YES, SIR.
THANK YOU,
SIR!

THE SEPOYS OF THE REGIMENT WOULD GO TO BED DEAD TIRED, BUT ONE AMONG THEM SEEMED TIREDLESS.



ONE NIGHT, I HEARD HIM TALKING IN HIS SLEEP AND SUDDENLY HE SHOUTED: GOAL!

HA HA HA!

HERE HE COMES NOW.

FINISHED PRACTISING,
DHYAN?

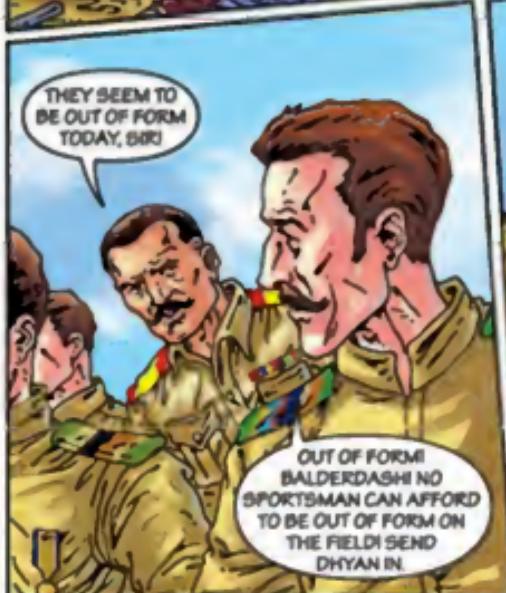
WE SHOULD CALL
YOU DHYAN CHAND
INSTEAD OF DHYAN
SINGH!

YOU'VE BECOME
A REAL NIGHT OWL,
HAVEN'T YOU?

DHYAN
CHANDI
DHYAN
CHANDI

SOON EVERYONE BEGAN TO CALL HIM THAT.

DHYAN TOOK PART IN ALL THE ARMY TOURNAMENTS. EVEN THE BRITISH OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT REALISED THAT HE WAS A GIFTED PLAYER. ONCE, IN 1925, WHEN HIS REGIMENT WAS PLAYING IN THE PUNJAB INDIAN INFANTRY TOURNAMENT -



GETTING HOLD OF THE BALL, HE PILOTED IT DOWN THE FIELD, ZIG-ZAGGING PAST PLAYER AFTER PLAYER...



AND THEN -

...TILL HE WAS IN
SIGHT OF THE GOAL



AND JUST BEFORE
THE FINAL WHISTLE -



ONE DAY IN MARCH, 1926 -





DHYANI WAS SHY AND RETICENT BY NATURE, AND NOT ONE TO ASK ANYBODY FOR FAVOURS.



THE WEEKS PASSED. EVERY DAY BROUGHT NEWS THAT SOME SEPOY OR THE OTHER HAD BEEN SELECTED FOR THE TOUR. DHYAN BEGAN TO DESPAIR ABOUT HIS CHANCES. THEN, ONE AFTERNOON -





*LONG LIVE, DHYAN CHAND!

HIS FATHER, A SUBEDAR IN THE ARMY, AND HIS MOTHER FELT PROUD OF THEIR SON, BUT THERE WERE WORRIES.





... AND REACHED NEW ZEALAND IN EARLY MAY.



THERE WERE FIVE SIKHS IN THE INDIAN TEAM. THE NEW ZEALANDERS WERE FASCINATED BY THEIR HEADGEAR AND THE WAY THE VISITORS PLAYED HOCKEY.



SAW THAT? THAT SMALL MAN TOOK THE BALL RIGHT ACROSS THE FIELD DODGING ALL OUR BOYS IN HIS PATH!

THAT'S ONE OF THEIR BEST PLAYERS.



DAN CHAND!

THE INDIANS PLAYED 21 MATCHES IN NEW ZEALAND, WINNING 18, DRAWING 2 AND LOSING 1. DHYAN SHOT OVER A HUNDRED OF THE 182 GOALS SCORED BY THE INDIANS DURING THE TOUR. IN CONTRAST, THE NEW ZEALANDERS SCORED ONLY 24 GOALS.



THE INDIANS WON THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE NEW ZEALANDERS. ONCE, AFTER A MATCH AT NEW PLYMOUTH -

EXCUSE ME, MR CHAND, MAISIE AND I SAW YOU PLAY AT AUCKLAND AND WE WERE AMAZED BY YOUR CONTROL OVER THE BALL!



THE WAY YOU TOOK THE BALL PAST PLAYER AFTER PLAYER LEFT US BREATHLESS!

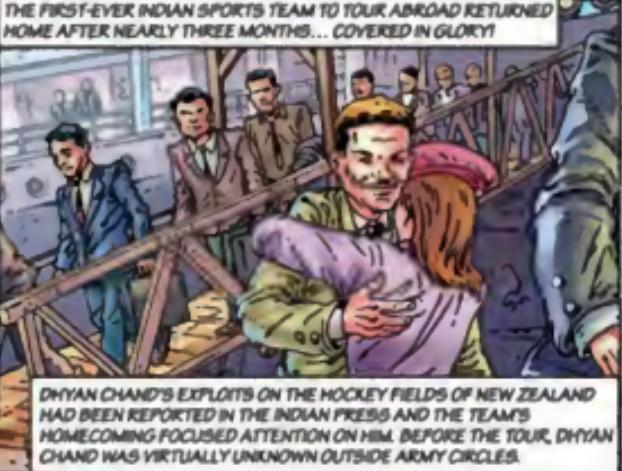
WE WANTED TO SEE YOU PLAY AGAIN SO WE FOLLOWED YOUR TEAM HERE!



UH... THANK YOU, MADAM!

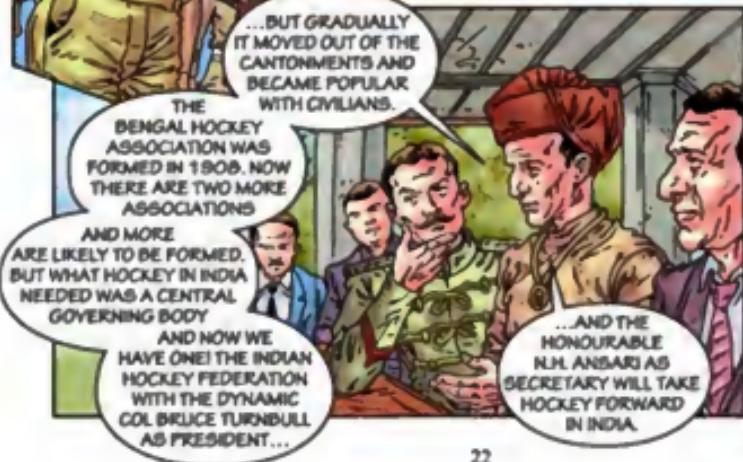
YOUNG DHYAN AND HIS TEAMMATES, SIMPLE VILLAGE BOYS THAT THEY WERE, SOMETIMES FELT ILL AT EASE WITH THE PRAISE AND HONOURS HEAPED ON THEM AND THE ATTENTION GIVEN TO THEM BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE AND THE PRESS.

THE FIRST-EVER INDIAN SPORTS TEAM TO TOUR ABROAD RETURNED HOME AFTER NEARLY THREE MONTHS... COVERED IN GLORY!



THE TOUR BROUGHT HIM TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC. SOON AFTERWARDS, HE WAS PROMOTED TO LANCE NAUK.

MEANWHILE, IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS HAD BEEN TAKING PLACE IN INDIAN HOCKEY. IN SEPTEMBER, 1925, IN Gwalior -



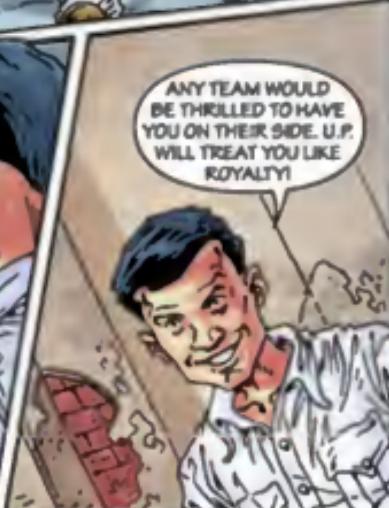
TWO YEARS LATER, THE INDIAN HOCKEY FEDERATION BECAME A MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY FEDERATION AND GAINED INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION.

IT WAS AN EXCITING TIME FOR ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN HOCKEY.

DHYAN, THERE IS TALK THAT HOCKEY MAY BE INCLUDED AS ONE OF THE GAMES OF THE AMSTERDAM OLYMPICS!



THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION DID FINALLY DECIDE TO INCLUDE HOCKEY AS ONE OF THE SPORTS OF THE GAMES. THE I.H.F. ANNOUNCED A HOCKEY TOURNAMENT TO IDENTIFY PLAYERS FOR THE NATIONAL TEAM. THE TOURNAMENT WAS HELD BETWEEN THE TEAMS OF FIVE PROVINCES - BENGAL, UNITED PROVINCES, CENTRAL PROVINCES, RAJPUTANA AND PUNJAB.



DHYAN CHAND CERTAINLY HAD NO TROUBLE BONDING WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE U.P. TEAM. IT SOON BECAME CLEAR THAT ON THE FIELD, HE WAS THE PIVOT AROUND WHICH THE REST OF THE TEAM REVOLVED.



ONLY THE PUNJAB TEAM, CAPTAINED BY ERIC PENNIGER, SHOWED SOME ABILITY TO STAND UP TO U.P.'S AGGRESSIVE PLAY.

BUT U.P. OUSTED PUNJAB IN THE SEMI-FINAL AND THEN OVERRAN RAJPUTANA IN THE FINAL TO WIN THE FIRST-EVER NATIONAL HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP.



19 FEBRUARY, 1928, WAS THE DAY WHEN THE TEAM FOR THE OLYMPICS WOULD BE ANNOUNCED. NONE OF HIS TEAMMATES COULD SLEEP THE PREVIOUS NIGHT BUT DHYAN CHAND, DISCIPLINED BY HIS ARMY TRAINING, WAS SOON SNORING AWAY.

LOOK AT HIM!
NOT A CARE IN
THE WORLD!

HE KNOWS.
HE'S SURE TO
BE SELECTED.

IF HE IS, YOU
TOO WILL MAKE
IT, MARTHINS.

YOU, CHAND,
SEAMAN AND FEROZE
ARE THE SPEARHEAD
OF OUR ATTACK.

THE SELECTION WILL
BE DONE BY MAJOR BURN-
MURDOCH SAHIB AND COLONEL
HILL SAHIB, BOTH ARMY MEN, SO
GORAS AND ARMY MEN HAVE
THE BEST CHANCE.

13 PLAYERS WERE SELECTED ON THE
BASIS OF THEIR PERFORMANCE AT THE
TOURNAMENT. DHYAN CHAND WAS ONE
OF THEM. THE TEAM WAS TO GO TO
AMSTERDAM VIA ENGLAND, WHERE
THEY WOULD BE JOINED BY THREE
INDIAN PLAYERS WHO WERE STUDYING
AT OXFORD...

I HOPE THEY
ARE RIGHT! GOING
BY FORM, I SHOULD BE
SELECTED BUT ONE
NEVER KNOWS!

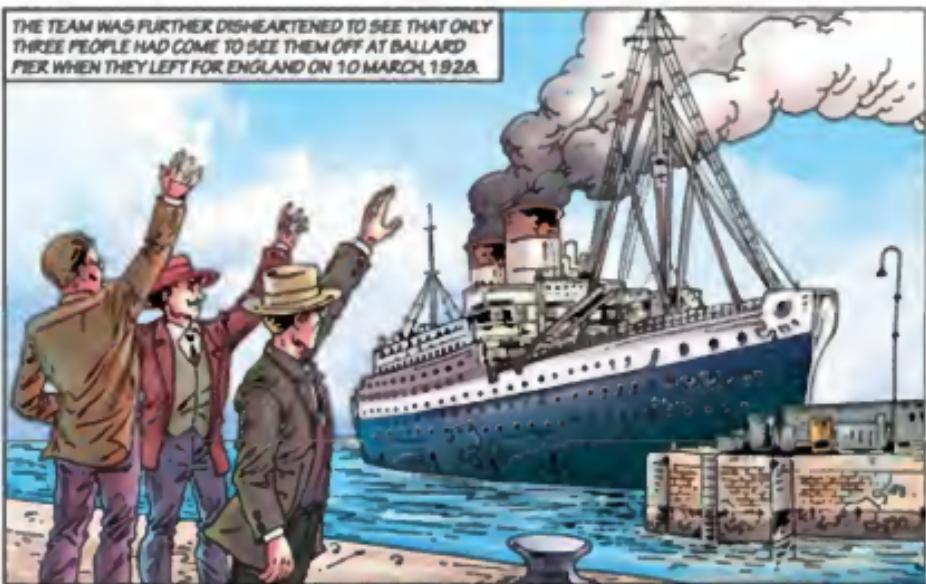
IS THIS THE SIDE
THAT'S GOING TO
REPRESENT US?

THEY
MIGHT AS WELL
HAVE SENT THE
BOMBAY XI!

... JAIPAL SINGH (CAPTAIN),
PATAUDI SIR, AND S.M. YUSUF.
THE TEAM HAD TO LEAVE FOR
AMSTERDAM BY SHIP FROM
BOMBAY*. WHILE IN BOMBAY,
THE TEAM PLAYED AGAINST
BOMBAY XI AND LOST 3-2!
DHYAN SHOT BOTH THE
GOALS FOR HIS SIDE.

* NOW CALLED MUMBAI

THE TEAM WAS FURTHER DISHEARTENED TO SEE THAT ONLY THREE PEOPLE HAD COME TO SEE THEM OFF AT BALLARD PIER WHEN THEY LEFT FOR ENGLAND ON 10 MARCH, 1928.



IT WAS GOOD OF
MAJOR BURN SAHIB AND
THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF
I.I.H.F., CHARLES NEWHAM, TO
COME TO SEE US OFF!

AND THE JOURNALIST
BHATTACHARYA... HE'S
FROM THE TIMES OF
INDIA, I THINK.

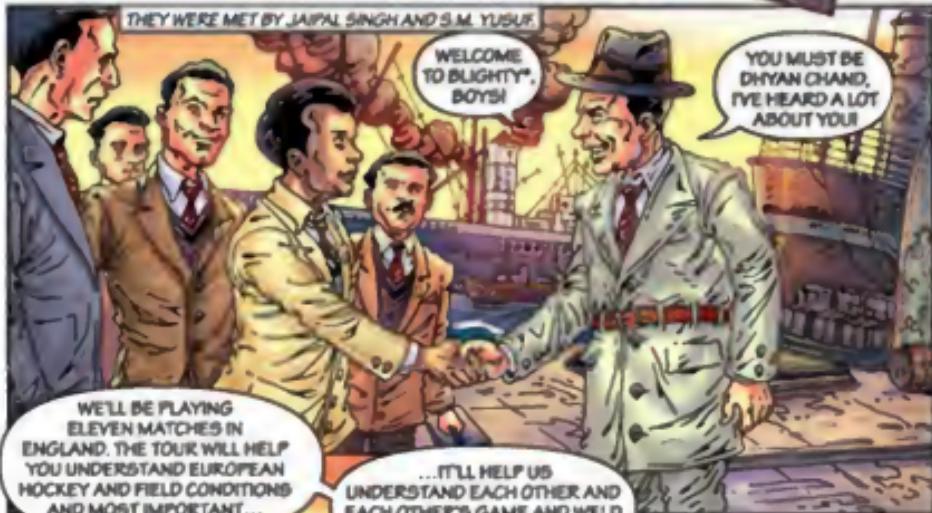


BURN-MURDOCH WILL BE
REMEMBERED FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION
TO HOCKEY IN INDIA. IT WAS HE WHO WAS
RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING AN ARMY
HOCKEY TEAM TO NEW ZEALAND
IN 1926 OF WHICH I WAS
A MEMBER.

THE SHIP TOUCHED TILBURY DOCKS NEAR LONDON
ON A COLD, MISTY MORNING IN MARCH.



THEY WERE MET BY JAIPAL SINGH AND S. M. YUSUF.



JAIPAL WAS WELL-KNOWN IN BRITISH HOCKEY CIRCLES AS HE PLAYED FOR THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY TEAM. HE WAS THE FIRST INDIAN STUDENT TO BE CONFERRED THE OXFORD BLUE IN HOCKEY. JAIPAL WAS AN ADIVASI BELONGING TO THE MUNDA TRIBE. AFTER HIS RETURN TO INDIA, HE WORKED HARD FOR THE UPLIFTMENT OF TRIBALS AND FOUNDED A PARTY THAT SPANNEAD THE MOVEMENT FOR THE FORMATION OF JHARKHAND STATE.

THE TEAM SPENT A MONTH IN ENGLAND, SIGHTSEEING.



IT WAS THE FIRST TIME ANY OF THE PLAYERS HAD BEEN TO ENGLAND AND THEY WERE THRILLED AND EXCITED BY THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF LONDON.

THE BRITISH PRESS DID NOT PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO THE INDIAN VISITORS. THE MATCHES THEY PLAYED WERE THINLY ATTENDED, EXCEPT FOR THE FOLKESTONE FESTIVAL HOCKEY MATCH THAT DREW ALMOST A THOUSAND SPECTATORS.



FOR THIS MATCH, THE HOSTS FIELDED THEIR STRONGEST TEAM WHICH INCLUDED NINE INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS. IT WAS IN FACT, BRITAIN'S NATIONAL TEAM.

THE SPECTATORS, NATURALLY ROOTING FOR THEIR HOME TEAM, WATCHED IN HORROR AS THE INDIAN FORWARDS, LED BY DHYAN CHAND, PENETRATED THE BRITISH DEFENCE, TIME AND AGAIN...

...TO SLAM IN FOUR GOALS! THE BRITISH TEAM FAILED TO SCORE.



BRITISH HOCKEY OFFICIALS WATCHED GRIMLY FROM THE PAVILION. THE BRITISH WERE WORLD HOCKEY CHAMPIONS AT THAT TIME AND THE PATHETIC DISPLAY BY THE HOME SIDE SHOCKED AND DISMAYED THE OFFICIALS.

I DON'T THINK
WE SHOULD SEND
A TEAM TO THE
OLYMPICS!

YOU
MEAN...

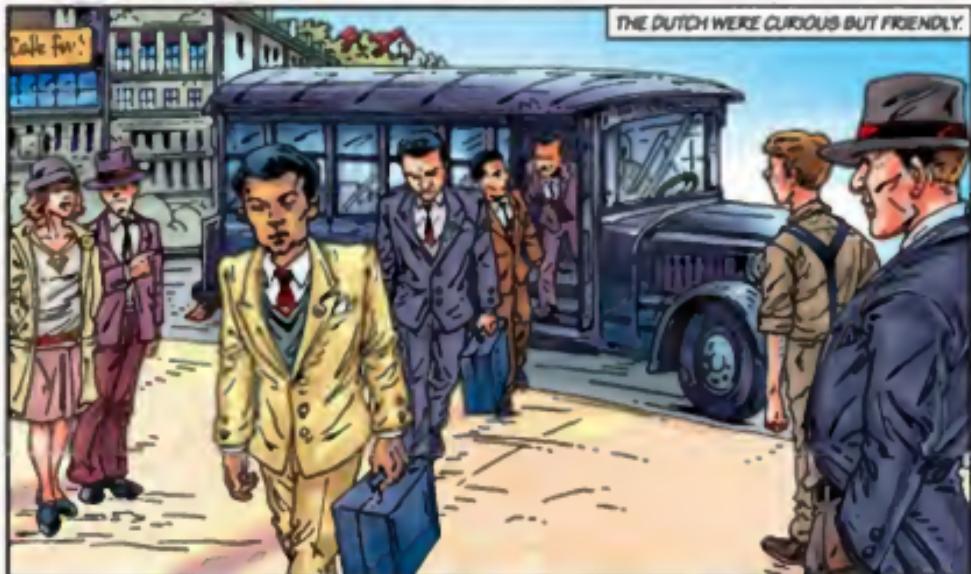
DID YOU SEE HOW THEY
DANCED AROUND OUR BOYS?
WE CAN'T RISK BEING DEFEATED
BY A SIDE FROM ONE OF OUR
BLASTED COLONIES!



LEAVING AS QUIETLY AND UNOBTRUSIVELY AS THEY HAD COME...



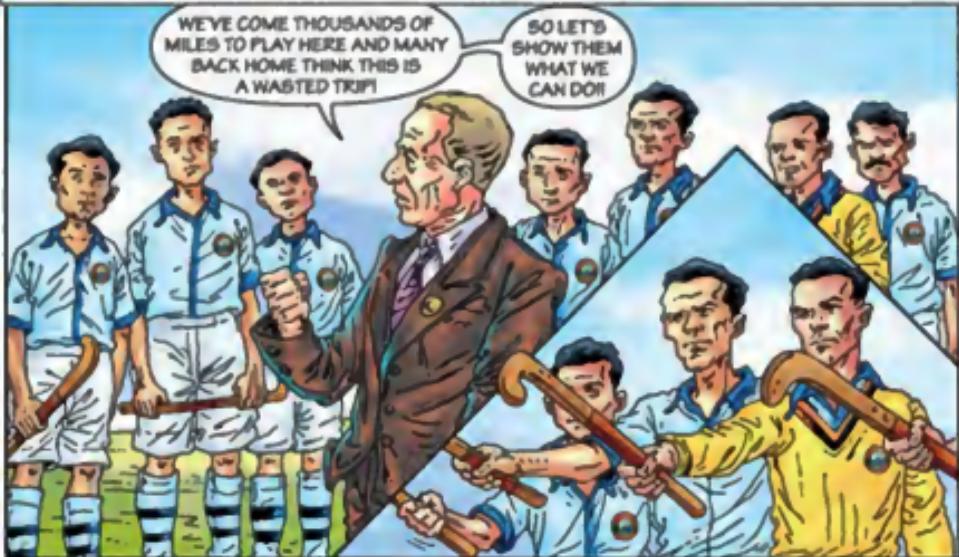
...THE INDIANS ARRIVED IN AMSTERDAM ON 14 APRIL, 1928.



POLITE FRIENDLINESS TURNED TO ADMIRATION WHEN THE INDIANS, IN THEIR FIRST MATCH WITH A DUTCH TEAM, AMSTERDAM XI, TROUNCED THEIR HOSTS 24-6!



THEY WERE INVITED TO PLAY IN GERMANY AND BELGIUM WHERE THEY WON EVERY MATCH. SO WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT THE OLYMPIC STADIUM* FOR THEIR FIRST OLYMPIC ENCOUNTER ON 17 MAY, THEY WERE CHARGED UP AND RACING TO GO. TEAM MANAGER, ROSSET, GAVE THEM A PEP TALK BEFORE THEIR FIRST GAME WITH AUSTRIA.



*OLYMPIC STADIUM IN AMSTERDAM